

General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen
OF THE CITY OF NEW-YORK.

REPORT
OF THE
FINANCE COMMITTEE,
March 3d, 1858.

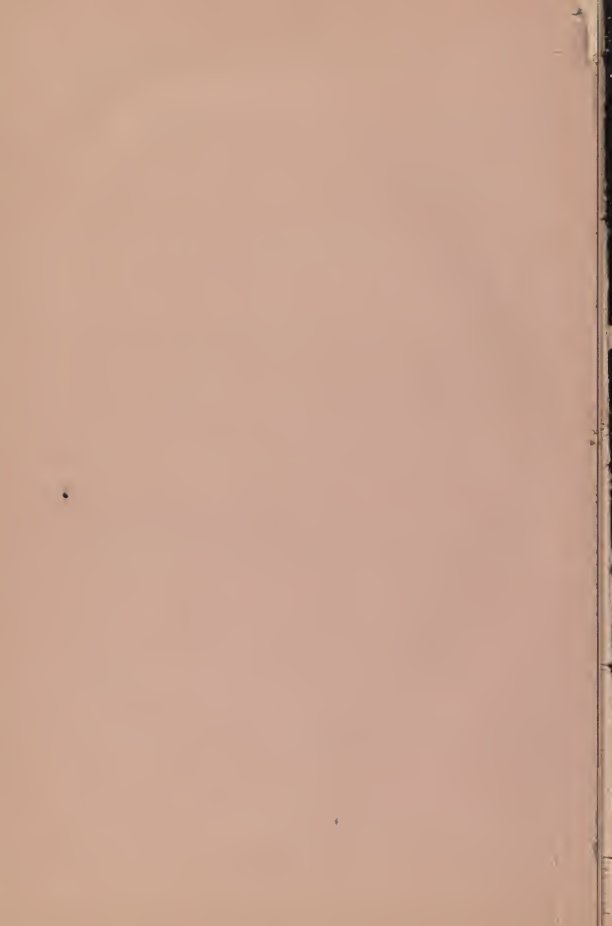
MEMORIALS
OF THE LATE
WILLIAM WOOD, Esq.

PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE SOCIETY

New-York :

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1858.



General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen

OF THE CITY OF NEW-YORK.

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE, in accordance with the requirements of the by-laws of the Society, respectfully submit the following report on the financial affairs of the same, with estimates of the probable receipts and expenditures for the year ensuing; together with a statement of the assets and liabilities of the Society on the first day of January, 1858:

Received during the year, from all sources, the sum of.....		\$24,150 97
Rent of Park Place House,.....	\$3,600 00	
“ No. 12 Chambers-street,.....	1,600 00	
“ Lecture Room, from Messrs. Bryant,.....	6,425 00	
Dividends and remission of tax on Mechanics' Bank stock,.....	1,374 17	
Initiatory fees from 13 members,.....	390 00	
Board of Education,.....	163 88	
Tuition bills collected by School Committee,.....	8,175 97	
From Book Committee, per School Committee,.....	200 00	
Notes discounted, School Committee,.....	1,486 71	
Catalogues and fines, Apprentices' Library,.....	314 33	
Books lost,.....	26 50	
Pay Readers,.....	163 50	
From Demilt Library,.....	150 00	
D. J. Sherwood, for insurance,.....	70 00	
Five certificates of membership,.....	5 00	
Interest on note paid before maturity,.....	5 91	
		<hr/> \$24,150 97

There has been expended during the
year 1857, on all accounts, the sum
of.....

\$22,302 43

To Savings Bank, interest on bond,....	\$300 00
Ground rent, No. 12 Chambers-street,.	125 00
Taxes, 472 Broadway,.....	269 19
Croton water rent,.....	25 00
Salaries, Secretary, Treasurer and Clerk,.....	375 00
Pensions, by Committee on Pensions,.	3,179 00
Salaries paid by School Committee to Teachers and Janitor,.....	8,924 28
Premiums and expenses by School Committee,.....	1,123 44
Notes to Mechanics' Bank, by School Committee,.....	1,500 00
Books, periodicals and expenditures by Library Committee,.....	1,668 19
Books and expenditures, Demilt Li- brary,.....	187 50
Salary to Librarian,.....	500 00
“ Assistant Librarian,.....	266 06
Insurance by Finance Committee,....	451 00
Repairs and Sundries by “	535 17
Printing, Stationery, &c., “	139 38
Sundries paid by “	44 48
Gas bills “	941 57
Janitor's and Doorkeeper's salaries, by Finance Committee,.....	528 00
Paid Henry Wood for fixtures,.....	500 00
Lectures and expenses by Literary and Scientific Committee,.....	720 17

\$22,302 43

Receipts,.....	\$24,150 97
Expenditures,.....	22,302 43

Receipts over expenditures,.....

\$1,848 54

Resources in hand, January 1st, 1857.

Cash in hands of Treasurer,.....	\$4,380 67	
“ “ Committee on Pen- sions,	11 00	
“ “ School Committee,..	499 54	
“ “ Finance Committee,.	30 67	
“ “ Library Committee: Apprentices', \$13 74 Demilt,.....	11 53	
	<hr/> 25 27	
	\$4,947 15	
Less balance due Literary and Scientific Committee,.....	90 69	
	<hr/> \$4,856 46	
		<hr/> \$6,705 00

Accounted for as follows :

Cash in hands of Treasurer, Jan. 1, 1858,	\$4,500 65	
“ “ Committee on Pen- sions,	232 00	
“ “ School Committee,..	1,484 29	
“ “ Finance Committee,..	91 07	
“ “ Library Committee: Apprentices', \$233 82 Demilt,.....	124 03	
	<hr/> 357 85	
“ “ Literary and Scientific Committee,	39 14	
	<hr/> \$6,705 00	

Estimates of the probable receipts and expenditures of the year
1858 :

RECEIPTS.

Rent of Park Place House,.....	\$7,200 00	
“ No. 12 Chambers-street,.....	1,600 00	
“ Lecture Room,.....	4,000 00	
Dividends on Mechanics' Bank stock,.	1,172 00	
Initiation fees, say 15 members,.....	450 00	
	<hr/> \$14,422 00	

EXPENDITURES.

Committee on Pensions,	\$3,400 00	
Finance Committee,	2,200 00	
“ “ Insurance,	400 00	
Library Committee, including interest on Permanent Fund,	2,000 00	
Library Committee, balance of appro- priation to Demilt Library, and in- terest,	424 03	
Literary and Scientific Committee,...	500 00	
Taxes and Croton water,	350 00	
Interest on Bond to Savings Bank,....	350 00	
Ground rent, 12 Chambers-street,....	125 00	
Secretary's, Treasurer's and Book- keeper's salaries,	375 00	
	<hr/>	\$10,124 03
Leaving a balance of		\$4,297 97

Assets and Liabilities.

ASSETS.

Real Estate, Park Place House,	\$130,000 00	
“ Crosby-street and Broad- way,	65,000 00	
Leasehold on Chambers-street,	6,000 00	
586 shares Mechanics' Bank Stock,...	14,650 00	
Furniture,	1,300 00	
Books, Apprentices' Library,	8,000 00	
Cash in hands of Treasurer,	4,500 65	
“ “ Committee on Pen- sions,	232 00	
“ “ School Committee, ..	1,484 29	
“ “ Finance Committee, ..	91 07	
“ “ Library Committee, Apprentices' and Demilt Libraries, ..	357 85	
“ “ Literary and Scien- tific Committee, ..	39 14	
	<hr/>	\$231,655 00

LIABILITIES.

Bond and Mortgage on Park Place House,.....	\$5,000 00	
Amount due Library Fund,.....	1,907 66	
“ “ Demilt Library Fund,...	5,000 00	
“ “ Interest on ditto,.....	300 00	
“ “ for improvement of Demilt Library, and interest,	300 00	
	<hr/>	\$12,507 66
Assets over liabilities,.....		<hr/> \$219,147 34

All of which is respectfully submitted.

JAMES BUCHAN, *Chairman*,
 JAMES VAN NORDEN,
 FREEMAN BLOODGOOD,
 HENRY A. HURLBUT,
 RICHARD E. MOUNT,
 JOHN A. BUNTING.

NOAH WORRALL, *Secretary*.

New-York, March 3d, 1858.

*Abstracts from the Annual Reports of the Treasurer and the
several Standing Committees, January 1st, 1858.*

FROM THE TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT.

Cash on hand January 1st, 1857,	\$4,380 67	
Rent of Park Place House,	3,600 00	
" No. 12 Chambers-street,	1,600 00	
" Lecture Room, from D. Bryant, ..	6,425 00	
Dividends on Mechanics' Bank stock, and Remission of Tax,	1,374 17	
Initiatory fees from 13 members,	390 00	
Board of Education,	163 88	
D. Sherwood, (insurance,)	70 00	
5 Certificates of Membership, \$1,	5 00	
	<hr/>	\$18,008 72
 Paid Savings Bank interest on bond,	\$300 00	
" Committee on Pensions,	3,400 00	
" Finance Committee,	2,700 00	
" Library Committee, Apprentices' Li- brary,	2,000 00	
" Library Committee, Demilt Library,	300 00	
" School "	2,663 88	
" Literary "	850 00	
" Ground rent, 12 Chambers-street, ..	125 00	
" Croton water,	25 00	
" Taxes,	269 19	
" Salaries,	375 00	
" H. Wood for fixtures,	500 00	
Cash on hand January 1st, 1858,	4,500 65	
	<hr/>	\$18,008 72

FROM FINANCE COMMITTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT.

Cash on hand January 1st, 1857,	\$30 67	
From R. E. Mount, Treasurer,	2,700 00	
	<hr/>	\$2,730 67

Cash paid Janitor and Doorkeeper,	\$528 00	
“ Sundry Gas Bills,	941 57	
“ Insurance,	451 00	
“ Sundry bills, repairs, &c.,	535 17	
“ Bill of Printing,	139 38	
“ Sundries,	44 48	
Cash on hand January 1st, 1858,	91 07	
	<hr/>	\$2,730 67

FROM COMMITTEE ON PENSIONS' ANNUAL REPORT.

Cash on hand January 1st, 1857,	\$11 00	
From R. E. Mount, Treasurer,	3,400 00	
	<hr/>	\$3,411 00
Paid Pensioners,	\$3,179 00	
Cash on hand January 1st, 1858,	232 00	
	<hr/>	\$3,411 00

FROM SCHOOL COMMITTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT.

Cash on hand January 1st, 1857,	\$499 54	
Received from Tuition Bills,	8,175 97	
“ School Fund,	163 88	
“ Book Committee,	200 00	
“ Notes Discounted,	1,486 71	
“ Interest on note paid before maturity,	5 91	
“ R. E. Mount, Treasurer, ..	2,500 00	
	<hr/>	\$13,032 01
Paid Teachers' and Janitor's Salaries, ...	\$8,924 28	
“ Books,	421 06	
“ Sundry expenses,	702 38	
Notes Discounted,	1,500 00	
Cash on hand,	1,484 29	
	<hr/>	\$13,032 01

Number of pupils on register, 274—boys, 111; girls, 163. Of whom 18 are gratuitous, viz.: 8 boys and 10 girls.

Children of Members, ; of Non-Members, .

There are 11 Teachers in the Schools, 5 in the male and 6 in the female department, seven of whom were educated in this School. There is also a Professor of the French Language and an Assistant, a Professor of Drawing and Painting, and one of Music.

The amount due for tuition bills, including the present quarter, ending in February,	\$2,600 00
Of which will probably be collected,.....	1,900 00
There will be due for salaries on 1st Feb- ruary next, about.....	1,875 00
There are unpaid bills, amounting to about	110 00

FROM LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE'S ANNUAL
REPORT.

Balance due Treasurer,.....	\$90 69	
Paid Lectures,.....	550 00	
Sundry expenses,.....	170 17	
Cash on hand January 1st, 1858,.....	39 14	
		<u>\$850 00</u>

FROM LIBRARY COMMITTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT.

APPRENTICES' LIBRARY.

To Cash on hand January 1st, 1857,.....	\$13 74	
Received from R. E. Mount, Treasurer,..	2,000 00	
" " Catalogues,.....	99 75	
" " Pay Readers,.....	163 50	
Books Lost,.....	26 50	
From Demilt Library,.....	150 00	
Fines collected,.....	214 58	
		<u>\$2,668 07</u>
Paid salaries to Librarian and Assistants, and sundries,.....	\$806 38	
" for Books and Periodicals,.....	952 96	
" " Stationery, Coals, &c.,.....	185 34	
" " Binding Books and Catalogues,	126 30	
" " Advertising and sundry bills,...	258 27	
" " Insurance,.....	105 00	
Balance on hand January 1st, 1858,.....	233 82	
		<u>\$2,668 07</u>

DEMILT LIBRARY.

Cash on hand January 1st, 1857,.....	\$11 53	
Received from R. E. Mount, Treasurer,..	300 00	
		<u>\$311 53</u>
Cash paid for Insurance,.....	\$37 50	
" " Proportion of expenses,...	150 00	
Cash on hand January 1st, 1858,.....	124 03	
		<u>\$311 53</u>

The Apprentices' Library contains—

Duodecimos,.....	11,602	
Octavos,	4,146	
Quartos,.....	100	
Newspapers,.....	118	
	————	15,966 vols.

Being an increase in the Apprentices' Library of 1,067 volumes.

The Demilt Library contains—

Duodecimos,.....	640	
Octavos,.....	1,958	
Quartos,.....	327	
Folios,	70	
	————	2,995 vols.

Being a diminution in the Demilt Library of 37 volumes.

Total number of books in both Libraries,..... 18,961

Total increase during the year of..... 1,030 vols.



Books presented to the Society during the year 1857.

By HON. JOHN KELLY, M. C.,

- Patent Office Report for the year 1855, 2 octavo vols.
- Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on Finance, 4 vols., 4to.
- Commodore Perry's Expedition to Japan, 3 vols., 4to.
- Commercial Relations of the United States with all Nations, vols. 1 and 3, 4to.
- Explorations for a Rail-Road Route from the Mississippi to the Pacific Ocean, vols. 2 and 3, 4to.
- Report of the Superintendent of the Coast Survey for 1855, 1 vol., 4to.

HON. ABRAM WAKEMAN, M. C.,

- Report on the Commercial Relations of the United States with Foreign Nations, vols. 1 and 3, 4to.
- Report of the Superintendent of the Coast Survey for 1855, 1 vol., 4to.
- Smithsonian Report for 1855, 1 vol., 8vo.
- Patent Office Reports for the years 1855 and 1856, 5 vols., 8vo.
- Message of the President of the United States, Dec. 8th, 1856, and Documents, 2 vols., 8vo.

HON. W. H. ENGLISH, M. C.,
Tenth Annual Report of the Regents of the Smithsonian Institute.

HON. A. C. ROBERTS,
Essay submitted by request of the Teachers' Association of the City of Washington, October 25th, 1856, by Samnel Youk Lee, octavo pamphlet.

HON. FERNANDO WOOD, Mayor of the City of New-York,
Communication to the Common Council, February 18th, 1857, octavo pamphlet.

HON. CHARLES MASON, Commissioner of Patents,
Patent Office Report for 1855, 1 vol., 8vo.

BR. J. T. B. MAXWELL,
A large print of the Marriage of Pocahontas.

THE SOCIETY FOR THE REFORMATION OF JUVENILE DELINQUENTS,
The Thirty-second Annual Report of the Managers of the Society to the Legislature of the State of New-York, January, 1857, octavo pamphlet.

BR. WILLIAM D. MURPHY,
The Advent, a Sunday School Hymn.
The Burial of William Colgate, 2 pamphlets, 8vo.

MESSRS. LAW, HASKELL & Co., Patent Solicitors and Publishers,
The Argument of Mr. Edward N. Dickerson, in the case of Sickles *vs.* Borden, octavo pamphlet.

Three numbers, successively, of the *Inventor*, a periodical published by them.

THE FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF NEW-BEDFORD,
Proceedings on Laying the Corner-Stone of the Library Edifice.

JAMES T. BRADY and JOHN A. BRYAN, Defendant's Counsel,
The Trial of Charles B. Huntington for Forgery, 1 vol., 8vo.

JNO. T. JOHNSTON, Esq., 2d Vice-President St. Andrew's Society,
Historical Sketch of the St. Andrew's Society of the State of New-York, with Constitution, &c., 12mo.

THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY,
Documents relating to the Colonial History of the State of New-York, vols. 1 and 8, 4to.

Catalogue of the New-York State Library, 1855, 2 vols., 8vo.
Annual Report of the Trustees of the New-York State Library, octavo pamphlet.

A. D. BACHR, Esq., Superintendent of the United States Coast Survey,

A series of Maps, ten in number, relating to the Coast Survey.

THE DIRECTORS OF THE MERCANTILE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF THE CITY OF NEW-YORK,

Supplement to the Catalogue of the Mercantile Library, and 16th Annual Report.

GEORGE T. TRIMBLE, Esq.,

Three Pamphlets relative to the case of the Seneca Indians.

THE CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY,

Their Fourth Annual Report. 3 copies.

THE MANAGERS OF THE APPRENTICES' LIBRARY Co., PHILADELPHIA,
Their Annual Report, March, 1857.

WILLIAM WOOD, Esq., of Canandaigua,

The Fourth Annual Report of the President of the Mercantile Library Association of San Francisco, California.

Br. ORISON BLUNT, Esq., Alderman Fifteenth Ward,

The Manual of the Common Council of the City of New-York for 1857.

THE MECHANICS' BANK,

New-York City Directories, from 1814 to 1855, 29 in number; also, other Directories.

DONOR UNKNOWN,

Patent Office Report, for the year 1855, 2 vols., 8vo.

DANIEL DANA, Esq., Bookseller,

A Catalogue of Books, selected, examined and exchanged under different heads.

THE MERCANTILE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF BOSTON,

Their 37th Annual Report.

Hon. J. HILL, M. C.,

Patent Office Report for 1856, 1 vol., 8vo.

J. M. CARNOCHAN, M. D.,

Address before the New-York Medical College, October 10th, 1857. 2 copies.

WILLIAM CULLOM, Esq., Clerk of the House of Representatives of the United States, through the Hon. John Kelly, M. C.,

Report of the Secretary of the Treasury, on Finances, vols. 1 to 7, 8vo.

Opinions of the Attorney-General of the United States, vols.
1 to 5, 8vo.

Public Lands, Laws, Instructions and Opinions, 2 vols., 8vo.

Reports on Pensions and Bounty Lands, 1 vol., 8vo.

Madison Papers, containing Debates on the Constitution, 5
vols., 8vo.

Congressional Debates, 29 vols., 8vo.

Congressional Globe, 35 vols., 4to.

Annals of Congress, 42 vols., 8vo.

Adams' Works, 10 vols., 8vo.

Jefferson's Works, 9 vols., 8vo.

Elliot's Debates, 4 vols., 8vo.

Hickie on the Constitution, 1 duodecimo vol.

Br. ISAAC FRYER,

Knickerbocker Magazine, for 1857.

THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION,

Their 5th Annual Report.

SOME MEMORIALS

OF THE

LATE WILLIAM WOOD, ESQ.,

THE EMINENT PHILANTHROPIST,

WITH

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT FOR HIS MEMORY.

PRESENTED IN A REPORT OF THE

APPRENTICES' LIBRARY COMMITTEE

TO THE

GENERAL SOCIETY OF MECHANICS & TRADESMEN

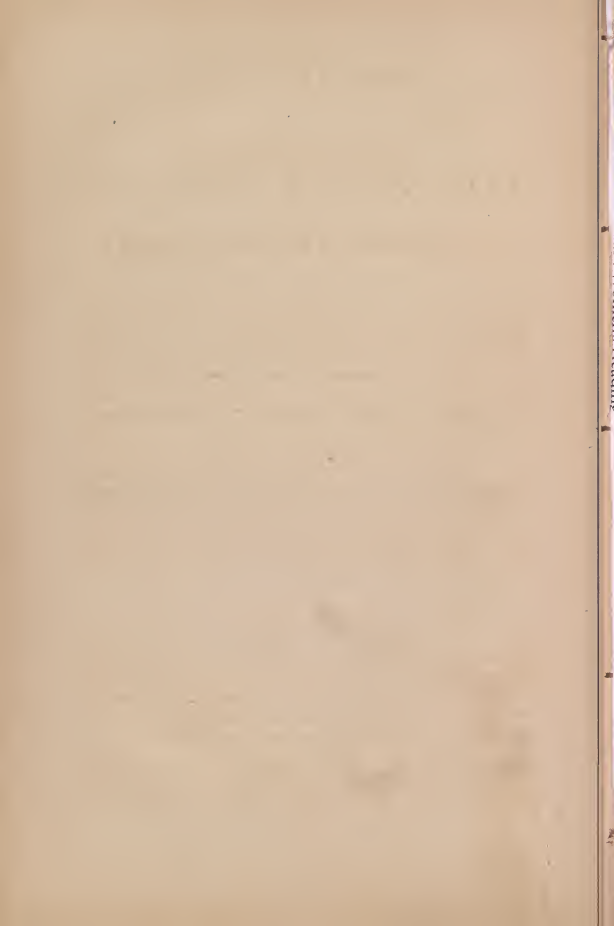
OF THE CITY OF NEW-YORK,

Dec. 2d, 1857.

New-York:

JOHN W. AMERMAN, PRINTER,
No. 60 WILLIAM-STREET.

1858.



SOME MEMORIALS

OF THE

LATE WILLIAM WOOD, Esq., &c.

At a meeting of the GENERAL SOCIETY OF MECHANICS AND TRADESMEN OF THE CITY OF NEW-YORK, held on the 2d of September, the Secretary called the attention of the Society to the accounts in the newspapers of the decease of WILLIAM WOOD, Esq., of Canandaigua, a well-known and greatly-esteemed citizen, who was the founder of the first Apprentices' Library in the world, and who had taken an active and efficient part in the establishment of the Apprentices' Library of this city. Mr. Wood was not a member of our Society, but from the circumstances above mentioned, the Secretary thought the Society might desire to place on their minutes some expressions of their respect for his memory.

A series of resolutions were moved by Brother Joseph P. Simpson, which, after some discussion, were referred to the Library Committee. The following is their

REPORT:

The Library Committee having had under consideration certain resolutions expressive of the respect of the Society for the memory of the late William Wood, Esq., of Canandaigua, moved by Brother Joseph P. Simpson, at a meeting held on the 2d of September last, and referred to them, would respectfully report:

That so far as your committee could judge from remarks made by several of the brothers at the time the resolutions were under

consideration, there appeared to be a general feeling among the members that some expression of thankfulness was eminently due and proper for the services rendered by Mr. Wood in the establishment of the Apprentices' Library, as well as on several subsequent occasions, and also of respect for his memory as a philanthropist, whose labors have been greatly beneficial to the community; but there were doubts in the minds of several of the brothers, whether the resolutions did not attribute to him credit for originating our Library that more properly was due to others, and particularly to deceased members of our Society. Such being the case, your committee have thought that the duty committed to them would be best performed by ascertaining as far as possible, and reporting the facts and circumstances connected with the inception and establishment of the Library. These having taken place many years ago, the particulars were not within the personal recollection of any of the present members of the committee, and consequently some delay has occurred in searching them out. They now, however, beg leave to submit the following:

They find on the minutes of a meeting of the Society, held on the 17th of March, 1819, the following:

"Ordered, That Thomas R. Mercein, Francis Cooper and John Slidell be, and they are hereby appointed to inquire whether any, and if any, what arrangements can be made for the education of the children of indigent members."

During all the remainder of the year 1819, there was not a quorum of members present at any time of meeting of the Society, and consequently no business was transacted until the meeting of January 11th, 1820, and the committee did not report until the meeting of March 1st, 1820. Very few of the papers and documents of the Society of a date prior to the year 1822 have been preserved, but fortunately this report is among the number. It is without date, but from other parts of the minutes of that meeting, it was unquestionably then submitted. It contains the first mention of the Apprentices' Library to be found on our records. After

strongly recommending the establishment of a school, it proceeds as follows :

"Intimately connected with the plan for the education of the children, as above suggested, is another, from which, if properly conducted, results equally beneficial will doubtlessly follow, to wit: the establishment of a Library for the use of the apprentices of mechanics generally. Your committee were not specially required by the resolution that occasioned this report, to offer any suggestions on this subject, but relying on the indulgence of their brothers and convinced of the importance of the measure, they beg leave to offer those considerations which have presented themselves with irresistible force to their minds.

"It is estimated that of the whole male population of this city, at least 6,000 are mechanics, most of whom have from one to four apprentices, who are generally the children of those parents whose situation in life have rendered them unable (however willing) to afford that education and instruction required to render them useful and efficient members of society; hence every means that can be devised to further the improvement and advance the knowledge of such, ought eagerly to be seized, in order to remedy, as far as practicable, the privation suffered in their early years, and which, in the opinion of your committee, cannot be more effectually promoted than by affording to all who are desirous of improving themselves, the means by which to attain that object, to wit: the gratuitous reading of elementary, moral, religious and miscellaneous books, and such others as may have a tendency to promote them in their several avocations.

"It might well be considered an act of supererogation were your committee to attempt to show the advantages resulting from the general diffusion of knowledge among so numerous and important a portion of their fellow-citizens as the mechanics of this city, as there are, doubtless, but few who hear this report who have not frequently, too frequently, experienced the want of information on many points connected even with their ordinary avocations, without reference to the high intellectual gratification enjoyed by those who have had greater advantages.

"The liberality which distinguishes the citizens of New-York is a sure guarantee that an appeal to them, in behalf of this Library, would result in the donation of all the books that would be required, except, perhaps, a few in the higher branches of architecture and mathematics, and which could only be obtained by importation from England.

"In the event of establishing a school, the same rooms could contain the Library, (as the books would be, of course, locked up in cases,) and the teacher might devote one or two evenings in a week for the delivery and reception of books—which would save the expense of a librarian, and thus all the great advantage above adverted to might be afforded at a very inconsiderable expense.

"Connected with these plans, a school for the accommodation of apprentices during three or four months in the winter, might also be established and conducted in a manner far better calculated to advance them in their education than the practice now in common use. As it would not be necessary to mature a plan for this purpose before next winter, and as the committee have already trespassed on the patience of the Society, we defer all further details on this subject to some future occasion.

"All of which is respectfully submitted.

"THOMAS R. MERCEIN,

"FRANCIS COOPER,

"JOHN SLIDELL."

The committee also submitted some resolutions, the last two of which are as follows :

"*Resolved*, That a Library Committee, consisting of Thomas R. Mercein, Francis Cooper, John Slidell, Anthony Steinback, John J. Labagh, Elbert Anderson, Abraham Van Nest, Jacob Lorillard and Abraham Bloodgood, be and are hereby appointed to take all requisite measures to establish a Library for the use of the apprentices of the mechanics of this city, on the plan suggested in the report just read; and that said committee be authorized to publish an appropriate address to the inhabitants of this city,

stating their object, and soliciting the donation of books, in order to carry the same into effect.

"*Resolved*, That a committee, consisting of Thomas R. Mercein, Francis Cooper, John Slidell, Anthony Steinback, Elbert Anderson, Abraham Van Nest, Jacob Lorillard and Abraham Bloodgood, be and are hereby appointed to digest and report a plan for tuition (during the winter evenings) of the apprentices of mechanics, who are or may be members of this Institution, specially, and also to report on the expediency and feasibility of extending the plan so as to embrace the apprentices of mechanics generally."

The resolutions were adopted, but the report was referred back to the committee, and again presented at a meeting of April 6th, 1820, when full authority was given them to establish both a school and library.

{ Your committee also find, among the papers of the Library Committee, the following letter, addressed by Brother Thomas R. Mercein to Mr. Wood. It appears to have been sent by Mr. Wood to the committee of 1828, and has been copied on their minutes :

"New-York, 4th March, 1828.

"SIR,

"Although I have not the honor of a personal acquaintance with you, I am emboldened to address some inquiries to you in relation to the establishment of the library for apprentices, lately established in Boston, because I am persuaded that the same enlarged and liberal views that induced you to take a leading part in the Boston Institution will prompt you to afford the benefit of your advice towards a similar one in this city. The Mechanics' Society of this city (a + wealthy and respectable Institution) have taken the thing up very spiritedly, and have appointed a committee (of which I am chairman) to digest and report a plan for carrying the project into immediate effect. Hence our committee are very anxious to obtain all and every information in their power; and, from a conversation I had with Mr. Lang, I am persuaded that I could not make a more suitable application than to Mr. Wood. Perhaps it would be more advisable, instead of making any inquiries of you, to beg

that you will, in your own way, give us all the information of which you are possessed as to a proper constitution for the library, and indeed all the detail, if your convenience will permit. A copy of any printed documents, blanks, &c., &c., which you may have executed, will be very acceptable, and may be sent by mail. We should be glad to avail ourselves of your experience in this matter, and if you see any thing to amend in the plan you have so lately organized, please mention it. In a word, we wish to act promptly but efficiently, and hence are desirous to obtain all possible information connected with a subject which we are persuaded will, if properly managed, result in effecting as great an amount of good as any institution ever instituted in this city.

“Yours, very respectfully,

“THOMAS R. MERCEIN.”

From an endorsement on the back of this letter, in the handwriting of Mr. Wood, it appears that it was answered on the 8th of March, 1820, and on the fly leaf is the following memorandum, also by his hand :

“*Memo.*—After receiving this letter, went to New-York to assist the work of effecting a Mechanics’ Apprentices’ Library; gave three or four months to the object; induced all persons I knew, (was introduced to many,) also, to give either old or new books; wrote in many papers in favor of the scheme, and deposited the same at Kirk & Mercein’s book store, Wall-street; received from Thomas R. Mercein one thousand printed certificates, and went in person to nearly as many mechanics’ shops and manufactories, and induced the “boss,” then and there, to sign them, inserting the names of the apprentices; had but one refusal—that by Mr. C——, in Pearl-street; 740 lads drew volumes on the opening of the library, 25th November, 1820. I then founded the Merchants’ Clerks’ Library, Clinton Hall; called the first meeting at Tontine Coffee House, and gave the first volume; worked at that institution some four to six months previous. I had the sole honor to found and originate the Merchants’ Clerks’ and Mechan-

ics' Apprentices' Libraries in Boston; those in New-York came next, and so on, to New-Orleans, to Montreal."

These are all the data your committee have been able to discover on our records, from which to form an opinion relative to Mr. Wood's participation in the establishment of the Library.

[The following statement forms part of a notice of Mr. Wood, in Ballou's Pictorial, of September 9, 1857, as well as in other papers of about the same date, and the fact appears to be unquestioned, viz.:

"The Apprentices' Library of Boston was the first he originated. This was inaugurated, with more than usual ceremony, on the evening of February 22, 1820, in the old State House—Theodore Lyman, Jr., delivering an address, and the keys of the Library being given up in form, by Mr. Wood, to Benjamin Russell, the president of the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanics' Association."

[From the foregoing papers it appears that the first institution of the kind in this country, and perhaps in the world, was the Apprentices' Library of Boston; that it was originated by Mr. Wood, and that its organization was completed on February 22, 1820.

2. That a committee of our Society, in a report, presented March 1, 1820, recommended the establishment of an Apprentices' Library in this city.

3. That Brother Mercein, chairman of the committee, wrote to Mr. Wood, on the 4th of March, 1820, asking information relative to the mode of conducting such an institution.

4. That Mr. Wood subsequently came to this city, and for several months took an active and efficient part in the establishment of our Library.)

These are all the facts your committee have been able to discover relative to the question, "To whom is due the credit of having first suggested the establishment of an Apprentices' Library in this city?" They do not appear to settle the question definitively, but the weight of their testimony is adverse to the supposi-

tion that it is due directly to Mr. Wood. If, then, he originated our institution, as well as that in Boston—as your Committee learn from those who were acquainted with him, as well as from several of his letters in their possession, that he uniformly claimed to have done—it would appear to have been in some indirect way, perhaps during the early stages of the latter, or through the accounts of its inauguration, published in the newspapers of the day.

Mr. Wood continued to take a lively interest in the Library as long as he lived. Some instances of this are recorded on the minutes of the Library Committee, of which we will only notice the most recent. We find, by reference to the minutes of the committee, that in 1844, after ascertaining by inquiry of the Library Committee that such a donation would be acceptable, he presented 500 New Testaments, to be distributed among the readers. A little later he presented 475 more Testaments, and also a sum of money, in relation to which he writes as follows :

“Canandaigua, Feb. 17, 1844.

“Esteemed Sir,—I am much obliged by your favor of the 12th inst. Its contents are very gratifying. I now send a draft on the Mechanics’ Exchange Bank for thirty-eight $\frac{2}{3}$ dollars, to buy, at the Society Bible House, 475 Testaments, same as the last, which will amount to \$33 25. The five dollars over I beg, Sir, you will do me the favor to deposit in the savings bank, for the reader at your Institution who may gain it under the following plan, (to induce them to read a little more than they otherwise might,) viz. : Every apprentice who has read the Testament throughout by the 15th May next, to draw a lot in the Library for the \$5, which is offered to the fortunate one as a premium for his industry, &c., in acquiring knowledge from the “Book of Life.” I pray you, Sir, to excuse, (this perhaps you may think a whim,) but I have and do still feel such a deep interest in the well-being of your Institution, that I could not help its showing itself in this way. Be pleased to offer my respects to your worthy government, and receive the same from, Sir,

“Your obliged friend,

“(Signed,)

WM. WOOD.

“To ISAAC FRYER, Sec., &c., *New-York.*”

These books were received, and fifty-one of the readers having complied with the conditions, drew lots for the money. A full account of the drawing was sent to Mr. Wood.

In October, 1848, the following letter was received from him by the committee :

“ *Canandaigua, Oct. 14, 1848.*

“ Esteemed Sir,—I have been thinking some time past, that I would make bold to say that I have an aged portrait of the writer, myself, which, if you thought advisable to receive, I shall be pleased to offer to the (your) Institution, to be placed in the most humble position within the walls of the Library in Crosby-street.

“ The following are the circumstances which put it into my possession : Previous to the opening of the Library, in 1820, two apprentices to a portrait painter, of about 16 and 20 years of age, applied to me to obtain them the privilege of drawing books with the other apprentices, which power I received from one of its early friends, Thomas R. Mercein, Esq. They expressed great gratitude, and called afterwards and requested I would allow them to paint my head ; after some hesitation I gave leave. It has been in my possession some twenty-eight years. It has received some severe usage during my absence. The frame is made from fragments of a very ancient frame, carved in the olden style, containing formerly one of Copley’s some century since. Any artist of your city can put the painting all right again. If, esteemed Sir, after due consideration, your government should honor it with due acceptance, it shall be at once sent to New-York.

“ Waiting the favor of an early answer,

“ I remain your ob’t servant,

“ WILLIAM WOOD.”

“ *To the President of the Mechanics’ Apprentices’ Library,*

“ *Crosby-street, New-York.*”

The chairman of the committee replied to this letter, informing Mr. Wood that it would afford the committee great satisfaction to receive the portrait, which was accordingly sent, and the receipt

of it acknowledged. Soon after the following communication was received from him :

“ *Highwood, 17th Nov., 1848.*

“ My Dear Sir,—I have received your very acceptable letter accompanying the box for Mr. Greig, who is an old acquaintance and friend. My son Gracie takes charge of it, and all will go as you desire.

“ I return you and Mr. and Mrs. Greig my wife's and my hearty thanks for your joint remembrance of me. We reciprocate fully your kindness.

“ I write from home, and have nothing of interest to communicate.

“ Being always respectfully and truly yours,

“ W. WOOD, Esq.”

“ JAMES G. KING.”

On the back of this is the following :

“ *Canandaigua, Dec. 4, 1848.*

“ Esteemed Sir,—I am gratified to learn from your polite letter of 30th ult., that the portrait is received by the government of the Mechanics' Apprentices' Library in so kind a spirit. I have no wishes to have it glitter in a golden frame, the one which encloses it being quite an original, as is (considering all the circumstances) the painting; and, dear Sir, it will be esteemed a favor, if you will not allow it to occupy a conspicuous place, but one of retirement. Is it possible to affix my most esteemed friend “Mercein's” letter to the back or front of the frame, so that it can show his early zeal in the cause, that we may go along together, as we did on many a day thirty years since. Is there no portrait of him that might grace your Institution. Surely his memory claims a mark of veneration. I write these lines on the letter of Mr. King, because I think it may please you to learn he calls you a friend. I met his honored father fifty years ago in London, who was also a friend; his upright sons have continued their friendship to this hour.

“ Farewell, kind Sir,

“ WM. WOOD.”

“ To JAMES S. GREIG, Esq., *New-York.*”

The portrait, when it came into the hands of the committee, was of a circular form, but little larger than the size of the head. It was afterwards inserted into a piece of canvas, of the size ordinarily used for portraits, and some additions made to it, after which it was framed, and now hangs in the Library. It is thought, by those who knew Mr. Wood, to be an excellent likeness.

The third resolution, moved by Brother Simpson, proposes that a suitable memoir of Mr. Wood be prepared and read before the Society, and entered in its minutes, and that a tablet be erected to his memory : the following extracts are submitted as such memoir, and it is respectfully suggested, that instead of a tablet, this report be printed with the annual report of the Society.

The following is a portion of an article relative to Mr. Wood, which appeared in *Ballou's Pictorial* of September 19, 1857, viz. :

"The recent decease of this gentleman recalls to memory one whose presence was familiar in our streets many years since, and whose public spirit and disinterested services have left many endearing memorials of his career. He was born on Bunker Hill, in 1777. He received a business education, and at twenty years of age went to Liverpool as clerk to a commercial house. After a short time he returned to Boston, and in copartnership with his brother, did a large business for a number of years. He afterwards carried on business in New-York and London. It was his lot to originate the *furor* in favor of the Greek cause, and also of the Polish exiles, and he was busy over a year in collecting and sending supplies and money to them. His most important services, however, those which will render his name dear to posterity, were in the circulation of books. His "hobby," as he modestly expressed it, for the greater period of his life, was the formation of libraries. The Apprentices' Library of Boston was the first he originated. It was inaugurated with more than usual ceremony, on the evening of February 22d, 1820. At about the same time he was instrumental in the establishment of a Library

for merchants' clerks, now known as the Mercantile Library, an institution of which any city might be proud. The success which attended these efforts seemed to stimulate him to more extended operations in this field of action. Libraries in New-York, Albany, Philadelphia, New-Orleans and many other of our principal cities, were soon started through his personal exertions. Mr. Wood was not a man of wealth, but such was the earnestness of his manner and the eloquence of his appeal, that those who had the means liberally aided him, and while those who had not, caught his spirit and co-operated with him in his laudable designs. In 1826, he moved to Canandaigua, where, with brief intervals of time, he spent the remainder of his days. In his retirement he kept up a warm interest in most of the institutions which he had planted; occasionally making them donations, and corresponding with their managers. He had, as correspondents, many of the principal philanthropists of this country and England. Lord Brougham, in one of his published addresses, writes his name with that of Franklin, as one of the benefactors of mankind."

The *Ontario Repository*, a newspaper published in Canandaigua, contains a long article, the purport of which is the same as the foregoing. A short extract only is given :

"From a copy of a letter of his, written last January to a friend engaged in the same laudable objects, we have been furnished with the following brief notices :

"In 1819 I commenced gathering, in person, books to form the Mechanics' and Merchants' Libraries in Boston, then in New-York, Albany and Philadelphia; afterwards, by correspondence, in New-Orleans, in which city I finally formed a Library for the free use of all. I raised about 2,000 volumes, and delivered them in person, on Sunday morning, from the basement of Dr. Clapp's Church, and induced Gov. Robinson to become its protector and President. During my stay in New-Orleans I put on board steam-boats, bound up the river, a hundred readable volumes, with the prices annexed. Every book found a ready sale to the planters on board. When I left in May, 1825, the experiment was perfectly successful."

"He adds, 'that he introduced libraries in merchant ships, then in our ships of war, the Franklin taking the first library of about 2,500 volumes. The seamen sent me, through the purser, \$540 to buy their books. I sent them about 1,200 volumes, giving the booksellers *no quarter* as to prices.'

"The volumes which returned with the ship, Mr. Wood used as a commencement of the Mariners' Library, at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, obtaining a contribution of \$1,500 to the same object, from the merchants of New-York. The result, finally, was the issuing of an order, from the Navy Department, for every ship bound abroad to take out a suitable number of volumes for the use of the sailors.

"The gratifying results attending his efforts in his own country induced him, in 1839, to visit England, with a view to the establishment of similar institutions there, but was unsuccessful.

"In Canandaigua his loss is deeply felt; and the high respect entertained for his character was shown by the following resolutions, adopted at a public meeting, held on the 6th of August, at the court-house :

"*Resolved*, That in the death of William Wood the citizens of Canandaigua are called upon to deplore the loss of one whose name gave character to their village, and whose activity and perseverance materially assisted its progress and improvement.

"*Resolved*, That while it is impossible in this form to recapitulate his many acts of charity and labors of love, which, without intention on his part, have become public, we nevertheless feel impelled publicly to express our conviction, that by his death all, both old and young, rich and poor, have lost a friend and benefactor, who had endeared himself to them in a thousand ways.

"*Resolved*, That the County of Ontario is also called upon to deplore the loss of one who, although not among her first settlers, did, during a long life, manifest his love and admiration for them, and, by his individual efforts, adorn the walls of her court-house with the portraits of these venerated men.

"*Resolved*, That the young men of our village, county and State

are called upon to lament the loss of one whose efforts and anxiety for their improvement, commencing at an early period of his life, ended not until the day of his death.

Resolved, That while as citizens we sympathize with the relatives of William Wood, we feel ourselves mourners, and in testimony of our affliction, and in regard for his memory, we will close our offices, stores and places of business, and at the hour appointed attend his funeral.

Resolved, That the proceedings of this meeting be published in the papers of this county.

Resolved, That the Secretary of this meeting be, and is hereby directed to prepare a copy of its proceedings, and present them to the family of which the deceased was a member.

After addresses by gentlemen present, in support of the foregoing resolutions, the meeting adjourned.

“GEO. WILSON, *Chairman*.”

“ALEX. H. HOWELL, *Secretary*.”

In conclusion, your committee would submit the following resolutions:

Resolved, That this Society entertain a deep respect for the memory of the late William Wood, Esq., the founder of the first Library for Mechanics' Apprentices in our country, viz., in the city of Boston, Mass.

Resolved, That this Society and the inhabitants of this city are under very great obligations to him for the active and efficient aid he rendered in the establishment of our Apprentices' Library.

Resolved, That by devoting his time and labor to promote the mental and moral improvement of the young apprentice, he has accomplished much for the well-being of his country, and has earned for his memory the respect and honor of all good men.

Resolved, That this report and these resolutions be printed with the annual report of the Society.

All which is respectfully submitted.

New-York, Dec. 2d, 1857.

MATTHIAS BLOODGOOD, *Chairman*.